fault, any unknown Balzac, or neglected Daudet, or unpublished Ferdinand Fabre, or forgotten George Sand. . . ."

And yet he has never mentioned Paul Valery, or Paul Claudel, or Andre Suares, or Francis Jammes, or me.

Today the big pine opposite the cedar is being cut down. Three men worked at it all day. This evening the desperate silhouette of its huge branchless trunk rises like a nightmare against the wonderful pure sky.

17 October

Like a prize fruit, Gourmont is ripening. He is losing his sharpness, gaining in fragrance and sweetness. His latest writings are full of juice. (His *"Dialogue des Amateurs'* of 1 October—the beginning of Am-*maux et morale chez La Fontaine* — remarkable.)[32] Just one step more toward autumn and he will be excellent in every way.
'

3

November

Gourmont does not understand that all intelligence is not on the side of free thought, and all stupidity on the side of religion; that the artist needs leisure for his work and that nothing keeps the mind so busy as free inquiry and doubt. Skepticism is perhaps sometimes the beginning of wisdom, but it is often the end of art.

4

Novemb er

Le Dantec, at the Van Rysselberghes*, claims to have no visual imagination at all.

"But after all," Mme Van Rysselberghe asks him, somewhat provoked, "when someone says to you: 'House* for example, what do you see?"

"I see simply H. O. U. S. E." he replies.

"Come now," she continues, "turn around and, quite sincerely, try to say something about me."

"What? What do you mean?"

"Oh, anything about me without seeing me; for instance, what color is my hair?"

"I know that your hair is gray, but merely because we were talking about it at table; I know it as a fact, but I don't see it"

"Well, something else, then. My height?'

"I *know* that you are small, but only because the last time I was here

[32] The "Dialogue" in the *Mercure* for the 1st of October concerned ethics; the first installment of "The Ldfe of the Animals and Ethics in La Fontaine's Fables" appeared in the *Mercure* for the 15th of October*